Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-71 (canceled)

Claim 72 (previously presented):   Method of controlling an agent comprising:
sending an agent parameter;
wherein said agent parameter defines a behavior of an agent;
setting a state of said agent to absent state in response to sending the agent parameter;
generating said agent parameter if said agent parameter is not returned within a predetermined time period.

Claim 73 (previously presented):   Method of claim 72 wherein said agent is animated agent.

Claim 74 (previously presented):   Method of claim 72 wherein said behavior of said agent is determined by a plurality of agent parameters.

Claim 75 (currently amended):   Method of claim 73 further comprising storing image date data of said animated agent.

Claim 76 (previously presented):   Method of claim 72 further comprising detecting one or more events corresponding to said agent and updating said agent parameters based on current agent parameters with each detected event such that the behavior of said virtual agent is continuously modified with each detected event.

Claim 77 (previously presented): Method of claim 72 further comprising sending information representing said predetermined time period along with said agent parameter.

Claim 78 (previously presented): Method of claim 72 further comprising receiving said agent parameter after sending said agent parameter.

Claim 79 (previously presented): Method of claim 78 further comprising changing said state of said agent to existence state in response to receiving said agent parameter.

Claim 80 (previously presented): Method of claim 78 wherein said received agent parameter is a modified version of said sent agent parameter.

Claim 81 (currently amended): Method of controlling an animated electronic pet comprising:

sending a plurality of pet parameters;

wherein said plurality of pet parameters determine a behavior of an animated electronic pet,

setting a state of said animated electronic pet to absent state in response to sending said plurality of pet parameters-; and

generating said plurality of pet parameters if said plurality of pet parameters are not returned within predetermined time period.

Claim 82 (previously presented): Method of claim 81 further comprising storing image data of said animated electronic pet.

Claim 83 (previously presented): Method of claim 81 further comprising detecting one or more events corresponding to said animated electronic pet and updating at least one of said pet parameters based on current pet parameters with each detected event such that the behavior of said animated electronic pet is continuously modified with each detected event.

Claim 84 (previously presented):   Method of claim 81 further comprising sending information representing said predetermined time period along with said plurality of pet parameters.

Claim 85 (previously presented):   Method of claim 81 further comprising receiving said plurality of pet parameters after sending said plurality of pet parameters.

Claim 86 (previously presented):   Method of claim 85 further comprising changing said state of said animated electronic pet to existence state in response to receiving said plurality of pet parameters.

Claim 87 (previously presented):   Method of claim 85 wherein said received plurality of pet parameters are a modified version of said sent plurality of pet parameters.